DAILY
DEVOTIONS

SWEET AS HONEY

"Then he said to me, 'Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.' So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth." Ezekiel 3:3

PREACH MAWUSHE

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BOOK TITLE: Sweet As Honey

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Dedication:

To all who hunger for the sweetness of God's Word,

May you find in these pages the nourishment of truth, the richness of revelation, and the joy of encountering His presence.

May His Word dwell in you richly, filling your heart with wisdom and your spirit with delight.

Taste and see that the Lord is good!

Acknowledgments

With hearts full of gratitude, we wish to acknowledge those who have played a role in bringing this devotional to life.

To the church—your prayers, love, and unwavering support have been a wellspring of strength and encouragement.

To our families—your patience, sacrifice, and steadfast faith have been the foundation upon which we stand.

Above all, to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—may all honour and glory be unto You. Your Word is indeed as sweet as honey to our souls!

— Preach Mawushe & Vespers Makado

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Introduction:

Title: The Sweetness of His Word

Ezekiel 3:3 (NIV) says: "Then he said to me, 'Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.' So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth."

In Sweet As Honey, we embark on a journey to savor the richness of God's Word. Just as Ezekiel experienced the divine sweetness of revelation, we, too, are called to partake of His truth and let it nourish our souls.

This devotional is designed to help you meditate on Scripture daily, drawing you deeper into the heart of God. Each reflection is a call to taste and see the goodness of the Lord, allowing His truth to transform your life from the inside out.

Over the next 30 days, our prayer is that you will experience the sweetness of intimacy with God, finding strength, joy, and renewal in His presence. May these pages awaken a deeper hunger for His Word and a greater delight in His truth.

With joy and grace,

— Preach Mawushe & Vespers Makado

Preface:

Title: Consuming the Word

God's Word is not just meant to be read—it is meant to be consumed, internalized, and lived out. When we take in His truth, it becomes a source of nourishment, wisdom, and delight.

Ezekiel's encounter with the scroll was more than symbolic; it was a call to fully embrace the message of God, allowing it to become part of his very being. In the same way, this devotional invites you to feast on Scripture daily, to meditate on its meaning, and to let it transform your heart and mind.

Each devotion will guide you through a passage, a reflection, and a prayer, encouraging you to dwell in the sweetness of His presence. As you journey through these pages, may you come to know that God's Word is not only instructive but deeply satisfying.

May your soul be filled with the sweetness of His truth.

— Preach Mawushe & Vespers Makado

THE UNSEEN REALITIES OF THE PRESENT

"I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 17:23

DEVOTION 01

From Makado Vespers

In this devotion, the first devotion of the book, l want to set the present moment in light of the unseen realities of the present. In other words, l want to expose the unseen realities of the present. First, what do l mean by unseen realities? Unseen realities are the evident truth and facts that surround us but we fail to see them. An example of the unseen reality that surround us is the supremacy of God. This is evident when we consider things like, the land you are standing on, God made it. The bricks you are using to build your house come from the land God made. The car you own was made by metal which come from minerals, minerals that come from the land God made.

The clothes you are wearing were made by cotton, a plant God made. The shoes you are wearing were made by leather, leather which comes from animal skin, animals God made. When we look at it closely, everything evolve around God, without God, nothing would be there. Yet, thinking about His supremacy and how without Him nothing would be available is not something we do daily. That deeper level of analysis exposes you to the unseen realities, truths and facts. It is more like, the unseen reality runs in the background of this world, it runs at the back of our minds and it is not something we consider frequently, yet it is of paramount importance.

As Christians, we are supposed to live and exist in the realisation of the unseen reality, it is what makes us different or sets us apart as Peter says it. That's being heavenly mandated, it's considering the unseen realities. Let me engage David when he talks about the unseen realities.

Psalms 19:1-4 (NLT) "The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world. God has made a home in the heavens for the sun."

The scripture above says the heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display the Lord's craftsmanship. What does the sky comprise of, it's the stars, the moon and the sun. They show us the Lord's glory and His craftsmanship. Day after day they speak and each night they make the Lord known to us. Here is the part that explains the unseen realities, the next part says they speak without a sound or word, their voice is never heard. It goes on to say yet their message has gone throughout the earth and their words to the whole world.

The sun makes no sound, the light from the moon and stars at night is silent, but when we consider the unseen reality, we are thinking of how God made them, how He only instructed the sun to shine by day and told the stars to be more evident at night. The way God made the sun to hide every night and appear each morning. The stars hide during the day and come at night, that's the unseen reality of the present. Remember l said these unseen realities are evident truths and facts that surround us but we fail to see them. Just by looking at the stars, we have to see God. The sun, stars and moon might be silent but they are always whispering and displaying an unseen reality, the craftsmanship and the glory of God. From the shining of the sun, we need to observe and set our eyes on the unseen realities of God's supremacy. We must apply that in all circumstances.

I want to talk about the other unseen reality that surrounds us. This unseen reality has to do with God loving us. It is easy sometimes for us to feel like the Lord doesn't love us, the Lord doesn't care or that the Lord has forsaken us. Sometimes we feel lonely and end up in bitterness and depression which leads to suicidal thoughts thinking God doesn't care. That is because we have closed our eyes to the unseen realities of God present in this age. What does the bible tell us about God's love for us?

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Look, God already loved the earth. He just didn't love the earth and sit on His throne doing nothing, He sent His Son. God already gave us evidence of His love, He already expressed His love by sending His Son to die. We have all received the greatest gift from God, it is His Son Jesus Christ. Sometimes we ask ourselves, what has God done to us to prove that He loves us? He sent you His son to die for you. There is no gift greater than that. Jesus says there is no greater love than this; a man lays down His life.

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

This is another unseen reality of this age. People think the greatest gift we can receive from God is a car or a house or a good marriage or a high paying job, No! The greatest gift God could ever give us as an expression of His love for us, we have already received it. It is His Son Jesus Christ. There is no greater love than this. The cross on itself, when we look at all that happened on the cross and how Jesus suffered, that to us must leave no question of the measure and nature of His love.

John 19:34 "Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water."

In the scripture above, Jesus was pierced at his side with a spear, blood and water gushed out. What more evidence do we need to believe that Jesus loves us? Jesus says this is the greatest love, that l lay down my life for you. This is the greatest gift and blessing we could ever receive from heaven, and already we received it.

So many unseen realities, unseen truth and unseen facts surround us today. If we do not focus on these unseen truths, we might think God doesn't exist or He doesn't care. Looking at the sun alone, it narrates a story that the universe has a Maker. Looking at the death of Christ alone, it shows us that God loves us more than anything. Let's close with these words, that God loves us just as He loved Jesus. The same love God had for Jesus saying things like "this is my son with whom l am pleased," He has for us too.

"I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 17:23

STRUCK DOWN BUT NOT DESTROYED

"We are hedged in (pressed) on every side [troubled and oppressed in every way], but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find a way out, but not driven to despair; We are pursued (persecuted and hard driven), but not deserted [to stand alone]; we are struck down to the ground, but never struck out and destroyed;" 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (AMP)

DEVOTION 02

From Preach Mawushe

How many times did you find yourself in a situation where you ask yourself where God is? In the midst of suffering and pain, you ask yourself where God is? I'm speaking of moments where you say, "God just let this cup pass me," or moments where you feel like tomorrow will not exist for you.

In most cases it happens when a family member gets sick and you feel like there's no hope, or you fail in school and you don't even know how you're going to show your parents the results. Right at that moment you just wish everything will just end. Yet it's just a phase and it will pass.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (AMP) "We are hedged in (pressed) on every side [troubled and oppressed in every way], but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find a way out, but not driven to despair; We are pursued (persecuted and hard driven), but not deserted [to stand alone]; we are struck down to the ground, but never struck out and destroyed;"

In moments where trouble hedges you on every side and you have no way out, just know that it's not the end of your story (you're not crushed) God is preparing greater things for you. There's that proverb which says, "when it rains it pours." You see, there's that moment when troubles just pours in your life and things don't go as you planned.

Let's take for example a situation where you had saved money to buy a family car then your spouse gets really sick. Immediately after that, you discover that your 16 years old daughter is pregnant and you also discover that your son is now a drug addict. On top of that you discover that your other child is not doing

well in school and all these situations require your full attention. That money is now needed for something different from what you intended it to do.

The example above is very practical, it was the same with Job. In one instant, his world fell apart. A servant brought bad news, before he had finished speaking, another arrived with a different story of bad news. While the servant who had recently arrived was still speaking, another one arrived and so on. All his problems came at once, his world fell apart in a matter of minutes.

Job 1:14-19 "And there came a messenger to Job and said, The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, And the Sabeans swooped down upon them and took away [the animals]. Indeed, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, The fire of God (lightning) has fallen from the heavens and has burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, The Chaldeans divided into three bands and made a raid upon the camels and have taken them away, yes, and have slain the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another and said, Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, And behold, there came a great [whirlwind] from the desert, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

Job remains a good example of a man who remained standing after he had lost everything, moreover he was a man like us.

Job 1.20 – 22 "Then Job arose and rent his robe and shaved his head and fell down upon the ground and worshiped And said, Naked (without possessions) came I [into this world] from my mother 's womb, and naked (without possessions) shall I depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed (praised and magnified in worship) be the name of the Lord! In all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly."

After losing everything in one day still Job did not sin against God. How many of us would have cursed God in such a situation? Some of us have bitterness with God over things that happened two decades ago, we question God saying, "Why did you take my husband? Why am l not doing well in class? Why were l

born in a family like this?" That was not the case with Job, he knelt down and worshipped God in the face of difficult and uncertainty.

Believe me, this is not as easy as it may look, this Christian life requires endurance and complete dependence on God. It's not easy, we're going to be in situations where it will be difficult to pray, where defending your faith seems impossible but right there in those situations put your trust in God. He's our provider when we're in need, our way when we don't know which path to take and life when it seems like there's no life. He's knows us and He loves us for His grace is sufficient for us always. He has already seen everything coming and has already made a way for you. God's plans are the best.

When the economy is striking your businesses down know that as a child of God you're not destroyed. After you've suffered embarrassments of failing in school just know that you're not driven to despair. It only requires you to go back to God. Find time with your maker, tell Him how you feel.

Hosea 6.1 "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."

Yes you're in a bad situation but it's not the end of your story. Depression, high blood pressure and diabetes are not your portion, just go before the throne of grace and ask for strength and you'll conquer everything. Our God is a man of His words. In Psalm He says he has placed His word above Himself.

Psalm 138:2 "I will worship toward Your holy temple and praise Your name for Your loving-kindness and for Your truth and faithfulness; for You have exalted above all else Your name and Your word and You have magnified Your word above all Your name!"

If in His word He says we are hard pressed but not crushed, definitely we will not be crushed.

BE AN INCORRUPTIBLE SEED

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:4

DEVOTION 03

From Preach Mawushe

Do you know who you are? If you cannot answer this question saying you are a Christian then you're in trouble. When we look at the world right now, a lot of things happen, some of which we understand what's taking place and why? For some, we have no idea. In most cases we are in situations where we don't know which road to take or which voice to listen to because a lot of voices will be speaking in our lives.

In such situations, it requires a Christian who knows their identity. Are you aware of your real and true identity? Who is your Maker? What is your purpose here on earth? The most important question after all is said and done is who do you aim to please?

Most of our time we spend watching these celebrities, seeing their lifestyles and dressing; we end up having identity crisis. We spend most our time on social media following people we don't even share the same faith with, to the extend of desiring to be like them and start imitating them in all things. Is it the way we're supposed to live as children of God?

Who are you?

Matthew 5.13-14 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."

Be the light of the world. You light the world with your works. Let them know your God by how you talk, dress and how you live your life in general. It's your duty to show the world the right path to take not the other way round.

Even is it's what most people are doing to the extend that even pastors are engaging in a certain bad activity, but ask yourself, is that the right thing to do? How can we stand in times like this? When most teenage boys are into drugs, when early marriages are now being normalized, when having a "small house" seems like a good thing to do. How can we stand unmoved, unshaken and uncorrupted?

1 Peter 3:4 - But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Who do we really aim to please? If we're being honest, the world doesn't really care if you succeed or not ,if you die or live; that's why most celebrities end up into drugs because they lack love, just one downfall and all the fans we'll be against them.

Yes, we post on social media get so many likes, then what? The day when your face burns and all the beauty is gone that's when you'll see that no one really cares. We should be in situations where God's voice is the only voice that speaks in your life. We have the word of God to guide us through, let's meditate upon it day and night otherwise we'll be swallowed by the world.

The only place where we can find true happiness is in God because he really cares for us. Let's pray for the activation of power to resist temptations. By the way, self-control is already in us, so is God's love.

2 Timothy 1.7 - For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Most of us are living in fear of the unknown. We ask ourselves if we will be able to make it in life? Questions regarding marriage or questions like, "What if l end up being a drug addict? Will l even go to heaven?" God has not given us the spirit of fear.

Let's ask God to help us stand unshaken knowing that we'll receive our prize at the end if we do not give up.

Galatians 6.9 - And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Just like Shadrach, Mishack and Abednego, let us remain standing. The Lord will be with us in the fire. Let us not envy sinners because their happiness is just for a short time but ours is for eternity. Every time we don't know what to do, let us read our manual for life which is the Bible and we will find your way.

YOU ARE YOUR BROTHER'S KEEPER

"And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;"
1 Samuel 30:11

DEVOTION 04

From Preach Mawushe

Often in the Bible we are told to love one another yet this still seems like a hard thing for us to do.

Job 42:10 - And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

The Lord turned away the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends. Some of us are still living in poverty because we're failing to pray for our loved ones. Just imagine if Job had not prayed for his friends, he would have died as a miserable and poor man.

We ought to pray for one another despite us being in situations worse than others, just pray for your neighbour. You never know, maybe that prayer will benefit you more than the one it's intended to help. This does not apply to prayer only, it applies in everything. Let's be able to stretch out our hands to other people through giving, there's a blessing in that.

Most of the times we fail to help or pray for others because we feel like we are in a worse situation, therefore, we want to solve our problems first before our neighbours'. Is it supposed to be like that?

Matthew 4:19-20 "And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full."

This is the story when Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. If we read verse 5 of the same chapter we see that the disciples wanted to send these people away but Jesus bid them not to and made the people to sit. In my mind l thought the disciples wanted to eat the five loaves on their own. At least

if they shared the food with the little boy they would be filled. But here Jesus proved the point that giving helps the giver more than the receiver.

The Bible says after they were filled only twelve full baskets remained, isn't this funny at the same time amazing? Where do you think these baskets went to? Isn't it obvious they were given to the disciples? When you give to others, more remains in your plate, even greater than before.

Let’s look at our lives, how many blessings of God are not being unleashed because we're not helping others? It's so obvious that the disciples were not going to be filled with only five loaves and two fish yet after all the multitudes fed from five loaves and two fish, extra baskets remained.

This also happened to King David when he came from Ziklag, he found out that the Amalekites had invaded his place and had taken his wives captive. At that moment David had nothing, whilst pursuing his possessions, he met a helpless Egyptian man.

1 Samuel 30:11, 13-15 “And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; And David said unto him, To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days agone I fell sick. We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and upon the coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire. And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.”

If David had not help this man, maybe he would not have recovered anything. So let's ask God to help us stretch out our hands to others for he set a good example for us.

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God Himself set for us an example for love by giving us Jesus. In the same manner he loved, let us to love our neighbours too. The Bible instructs us to love one another. By loving one another, we become our brother's keepers.

HE'S ALL THAT

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Habakkuk 3:17–18

DEVOTION 05

From Preach Mawushe

Our God is an amazing God, excellent in all that He does. Just look at everything around you and see the beauty of His work. The works of the Lord are beautiful, they are pleasing to us and to God Himself. After God created the earth, He looked down from heaven and He was pleased.

Genesis 1:31 "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

You were made by God, to Him you are a reflection of His pleasing work. When God looks at you, He sees His good work. Even if you reflect on your life, you'll see the good work He has done to you from the moment you were born up until now. You should praise Him for that.

When praising God, it's important to remember that we praise God for who He is, that is His nature and characteristics. What happens around us or who we have become is a lesser factor that's supposed to contribute to our praise. For example, you are deaf, you praise God because He is holy (His nature) and you don't allow your condition (what's happening around you) to remove or limit your praise. In that way, we are able to worship God despite our situations, we worship in season and out of season.

Habakkuk 3: 17-19 "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make

me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments."

Praising God in bad times shows how much we trust God. We should be able to rejoice in hardships knowing that God is faithful and He loves us so much and that He won't let any harm come near us. All things are working for our good, do we believe that? Our God is the Provider. Yes He's able to provide for our every need. It might not make sense right now but when it does we will wish we had simply relaxed and trusted Him more in the midst of trouble.

Romans 8:28 - And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

The only question we should ask ourselves is, do we love God? If the answer is yes then our everything (all aspects of our lives) dwells in God's perfect plan.

2 Samuel 12:19-20 "But when David that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, he did eat."

After David's son had died, he went into the house of God and worshipped God. We should reach that level where we understand that whether l have money or l don't, God remains God. Whether l pray or l don't, He still remains God. Our God is the healer, comforter, a loving father, a friend etc. He's a lot of things. He's the lion of Judah and the lamb at the same time. He's the river of life and the consuming fire also. The prince of peace yet the mighty man of war. Let's praise Him in whatever situation we're in because He does not change.

2 Timothy 2:13 "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself."

People change but not our God. We see that when we are in bad situations we pray less thinking God will not help us but that does not change Him. Just because we're not in the right state of mind doesn't mean God is also in that state. He's perfect in all His ways.

TELL GOD BECAUSE HE LISTENS

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." 1 John.5.14

DEVOTION 06

From Preach Mawushe

There's nothing that hurts than talking to someone who is not paying attention to you. We all need that listening ear. There's a proverb which says a problem shared is a problem half solved. So imagine telling all your problems to someone who listens and paying attention to every detail, providing solutions too.

Isaiah 65:24 "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."

Before we pray, God already provide the answers. Our answers are already there and our problems have been solved before we tell God.

1 John.5.14 "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

Most of us are suffering from high blood pressure and depression because we don't have anyone to share our struggles with, some even commit suicide but the only answer to that is found in prayer. Tell God your problems. He sees you and He cares so much about you.

Psalm115.4-7, 9 "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield."

What a God we have, imagine praying to an idol, that cannot even hear you. We can tell God everything whether good or bad because He already knows before we tell Him. Telling God our problems is just a procedure that is a must for a Christian because nothing is hidden in His eyes. Whether you did something very bad, just tell Him.

He's that one friend who loves you despite your flaws, He won't judge you but will welcome you with open hands. It's okay to tell God your weaknesses.

Psalm 69.5 “O God, You know my folly and blundering; my sins and my guilt are not hidden from You.”

Let's say a friend of yours bought a car or passed in school and you didn't, then you start feeling jealous. We know jealousy is not a good thing to have and obviously sharing that with them may not be the best thing to do. If that is how you're feeling and you don't want to sin anymore, you can tell God about it. Some of us are struggling with addictions and we don't know what do about them. We feel like if we share with a friend they will judge us. The only solution to that is prayer.

2 Corinthians 12:9 “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Isn't this good news? Our God already knows that we have weaknesses so why hiding them from Him. Let's tell Him because He's the only one who can save us. His power is made perfect in our weaknesses then what more do we need.

Psalm 34.15 “The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.”

Cast all your burdens to the Lord. No mountain is too big for Him to climb and no sea He can't part for you. He's ears are open for you.

Matt.11.28 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

FIRE

"Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." James 3:5-6

DEVOTION 07

From Preach Mawushe

James 3:5 "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."

Fire can be a good thing or bad depending on where it's being used. When there's an accident and it burns houses, it is a problem. When we use it for cooking, it's a good thing. That's the same thing with the tongue, it can be a bad thing or good and we choose how we use it. With it we can bless and we can curse. With the tongue we can declare life or death. Being able to speak positively is a character we should all adapt as children of God because it's often a test of our faith in God.

Imagine coming out of a very difficult exam and you're hundred percent sure that you wrote nothing but still when asked you're supposed to respond positively. That shows how much you trust God, knowing that He'll make ways for you to pass that exam. So many times we're tempted to say the wrong things due to the current situation but let's look at how prophet Ezekiel did.

Ezekiel 37:1- 3 "The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley;

and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest."

The Bible clearly told us that the bones were dry and obviously under normal circumstances no one would ever think that those bones would live again. l liked how Ezekiel responded to that situation, O Lord God, thou knowest! Every time we're not sure what to say, let us leave everything to God.

If they ask you if you're going to pass or not just say God knows. When they ask you if your business will work out or not just say what Ezekiel said. As a matter of fact God, knows everything and nothing is too hard for Him.

Daniel 6:12-14, 18 "Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him."

What are you declaring in your life or your children's life? Are you not declaring things that will cause you no sleep like King Darius? The presidents of the kingdom and the princes sort to find occasion against Daniel so they ask king to sign a decree. How many times are we forced by circumstances to say bad things? When your son fails in school, it doesn't mean he's a failure, speak blessings in his life .As a child of God, have a positive mind.

That's why God had a tendency of changing people's names before He started using them. The more you talk about it, the more you believe and when you believe, God will make it work.

Genesis 17:5 "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."

Just imagine Abraham being called the father of many nations when he had no child at all. This really showed how Abraham had faith in God otherwise another person would have refused saying how can l be called the father of nations when l have no child. Continue speaking blessings everyday upon your life, your tongue has the power to change situations.

Everything hears, tell that problem of yours that you won't give up, you're blessed, that you're the head and not the tail. That's what happens with names, imagine naming your child Problem and you expect that person to be a blessing to the family. Some of us have negative names and we've started doing things that are associates with the negative aspects from our names, yet we want to change. We have a good example of a person who was in that same situation.

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 "And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."

Just ask God to enlarge your territory. Don't let people's words direct you when you can make a difference. You have your fire and you choose how you're going to use it.

From Makado Vespers - (minute sermon extension)

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Jesus said let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven. Well, the tongue is the one that creates the fire that will produce that light. Let's use our tongues to create flames that will shine before men, from our words, let the whole world see our kind and loving words that they may be encouraged and strengthened, and they will glorify our Father in heaven. Watching what we say is on itself a good work that glorifies the Father.

THE FIRST LOVE

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."
Revelations 2:4-5

DEVOTION 08

From Preach Mawushe

Just try to remember of the days that followed immediately after you received your salvation. How zealous were you? How punctual you were to church? You didn't want to miss any meeting at church. You just wanted to tell everyone you meet about the good news, carrying your Bible everywhere. These were your first works.

Most of us were so zealous for God. Then they're those who were born and raised in Christian homes. You can relate to the stories you hear from your parents of how you were punctual in Sunday school and you made sure you prayed before you eat. How you could not sleep without praying and you read your Bible every day? Somehow that changed.

Galatians 5:7 "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

Some were hindered by friends and family. You were told that you're doing too much and you believed it so you quitted leading the Bible study, you quitted singing. You were told that your sermons are boring so you stopped preaching in church. Just revisit your faith and you'll see where you have fallen.

Hebrews 12:1 - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,"

Some are just weights we need to remove because they slow us down. These weights include the mumblings and murmuring when asked to lead the church service, being okay with sleeping without praying. It's the small things that make you relax and eventually divert you. Let us go before God and ask for renewal of our first works. God's hands are always open for you.

Matthew 3:8 “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:”

It's never too late to repent. God is calling us to repentance. The Bible says He leave the ninety-nine only for that one sheep and that one sheep is you.

Matthew 18:12-13 “How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.”

The scripture above shows that God will never give up on us, He will search for us and find us no matter how far we run from Him. David says in Psalm 139 says, Lord, where can l hide from your presence. In the sea you are there, in the skies you are there. The same thing for us, even if we start drinking beer and partying, in the night club God is there finding ways to reconnect us to Himself. God will never give up on us.

In Lamentations it says His mercies are new every morning, God's mercy to forgive us is new every morning, this means every morning God has a way to bring us closer to Him despite how we forsake Him. If God won't forsake us, who are we to forsake Him. If God will never leave us, why then do we turn away from Him and leave Him. If God will never give up on us and leave us, who are we to give up on God and abandon him.

Let's read again the same Scripture from Hebrews.

Hebrews 12:1 “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,”

Let us run the race with perseverance. This race is not a sprint, it's not something you finish in two days or thirty minutes. It's a marathon. It's a journey. Our Christianity lasts till the day we die, hence each day we are looking for ways to reconnect to Christ. Each day we have to remain in the first love. We are supposed to maintain it.

Hence we have to stand firm in our first love. This is a marathon and a journey, it's a long race, somehow you might have deviated from the first love, reflect and find your way back to the first love. Our Christianity is a marathon, let's return to the first love.

Let's close by saying, stand firm in your first love. You will be rewarded by Christ for standing firm in your first love for all your days. Your standing firm in your first love is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

BURN THE SHIPS

"Whoever does not persevere and carry his own cross and come after (follow) Me cannot be My disciple. So then, any of you who does not forsake (renounce, surrender claim to, give up, say good-bye to) all that he has cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:27, 33

DEVOTION 09

From Preach Mawushe

Burn the ships is a song title that is based on a story of soldiers who went to fight on an island. Upon arrival their captain commanded them to empty their ships then he burned all the ships. This was a 'no turning back' situation.

It's either they were going to conquer their enemies or they were going to be conquered and be killed. This is exactly what happens in the Christian life from the day you decide to follow Christ. If we decide to follow Christ, we leave everything. We no longer prioritize our lives or our well-being.

Philippians 1.21 "For to me, living is for Christ, and dying is even better."

When you're a follower of Christ, you care less about your life. When receive Christ, it doesn't matter whether you die or you live because internal life is assured to you.

1 Kings 19:20-21 "And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him."

Many of us have relatives or friends who went abroad. Out of all those people, how many actually give away their belongings like houses or livestock. Most don't do that because they don't want to cut ties with their families and at some point they might want to come back. This is not what happens when we want to follow Christ. The above verses tell us about the beginning of prophet Elisha's ministry. We're told that he slaughtered his oxen and he ate with people. This

meant that even if things didn't go well in his ministry, he had to persevere because he now had nothing, so going back was not an option for him.

Luke 14:27, 33”Whoever does not persevere and carry his own cross and come after (follow) Me cannot be My disciple. So then, any of you who does not forsake (renounce, surrender claim to, give up, say good-bye to) all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

If we want to be followers of Christ we have to surrender our everything to God. Following Christ is a life-time thing. It doesn't matter if you feel it or you don't. Whether you're in the mood or not you just have to obey God. It also means we now have to live a life that pleases Him and destroy every plan- B.If you used to go to witchdoctors for help ,this has to change when you start following Christ. Whether we're in whatever situation, let us choose God.

That level of faith where we say even if my God does not come through for me in this situation but l choose Him, like what Daniel's friends did.

Dan 3:16-18 “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, Your Majesty can be sure that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."

Things are not going to be good always but we have to fight. Let us stay in the lane. We'll be thrown in different fires or different lion's dens but let us stick to God because there's a price set before us.

1 Corinthians 3:14 - If the work survives the fire, that builder will receive a reward.

HUMILITY

"Therefore, anyone who becomes humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 18:4

DEVOTION 10

From Preach Mawushe

Sometimes we are tempted to justify ourselves after we have been corrected but it takes humility to accept corrections. We want to be heard more than we want to hear other people's views. Let's look at a few advantages of humility in our lives. Being humble makes the people around you open up to you. People won't be afraid of you and it allows room for correction. It's very hard to correct someone who has pride or who thinks they know it all. Are your children comfortable around you that they can open up to you?

Luke.9.18-20 "One day as Jesus was alone, praying, he came over to his disciples and asked them, "Who do people say I am?" "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say you are one of the other ancient prophets risen from the dead." Then he asked them, "Who do you say I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Messiah sent from God!"

Jesus was very humble that is why his disciples were comfortable enough to tell him what people thought he was. People around us are not even comfortable to share their ideas because they know we will react in a bad way. Some have partners who are cheating and kids who are misbehaving behind their backs and the whole community knows about but because there are unapproachable, no one tells them. Jesus was the son of God yet he humbled himself before men.

Philippians 2:5-6, 8 "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

When you become humble you'll serve yourself from embarrassment. It's good to admit that you don't know everything, it does not mean you're dumb but it just shows you're wise. Don't be an 'l know it all' kind of person, it's not godly. Even if you know that the people around you have little knowledge than you have, give them the chance to express themselves. You never know, maybe, you

might learn a few things. That also applies even in our churches, just because you're an elder, pastor or deacon doesn't make you superior.

Luke.14.8-10 "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, "Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, "Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you."

If you humble yourself you'll be lifted up. Even if you feel like you pray, fast or know the bible more than other people, just remain humble.

Matthew 18.4 "Therefore, anyone who becomes humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."

If you correct a little child, he or she will listen because children are humble and obedient. That is why Jesus is telling us to be like children, it's one of the characters we should have as Christians. Some of us, our employees are even afraid of telling us when we make mistakes because we're so arrogant. Others are feared by their kids, your children or partner cannot tell you that your clothes are not matching because they know you'll shout back. Let us desire humility for we will be exalted.

James 4:10 "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."

THE BIG BROTHER'S CHARACTER

"Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins." James 5:19-20

DEVOTION 11

From Preach Mawushe

When we fall, we often need someone to encourage and motivate us. If you just look around you, you'll notice many people who are leaving in darkness. Some are our relatives, others are close friends and we spend most of our time with those people but we don't share the word with them. We are not even affected when we see people living recklessly.

Luke.15.28-32 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

How many times do we get angry when someone repents? We want God to bless us more than everyone around us,we want to go to heaven alone. The above is a story of the lost son but l want us to focus mainly on the big brother's character. When the younger son was making bad decisions, the brother didn't even warn him or try to talk to him. On top of that, knowing that his little brother was living recklessly, he did not put effort to try and find him. He actually got angry when the younger son returned back. It's so easy to judge the older son but we're doing that every day. We have siblings we even share the same room with, workmates we share the same desk with yet they are not saved. Do we put effort so they can receive salvation too?

Acts 20:9-10 "And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third

story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, "Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him."

Eutychus was sinking into a deep sleep in a room full of believers but no one tried to wake him up. Everyone was so focused on what they were doing. We had so many people around who were weeping, tearing and crying as Paul taught that they didn't notice their fellow believer sleeping. So many people around us are crying for help, sometimes we're too focused on our lives that we fail to recognize others around us. If someone had just tapped Eutycus or gave him water, maybe that would have helped him. You have friends who you used to go to church with but you no longer see them at church. Look for those people, try to talk with them encouraging them and notice if they don't repent. Let us not judge people before we hear their side of the story.

1 Thessalonians 3.2 “and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,”

Paul often made follow ups to believers. He understood that this journey of faith needs encouragement. That is what we should also do as children of God let us encourage one another.

James 5:19 “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”

If you understand that it was grace that you now know God, you'll be eager to win souls and encourage others. Let's us spread the good news to the unbelievers. Those who are sleeping, let us strengthen and encourage them so that when the son of God comes, He will say well done.

Mark 16:15 “And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

This is the great commission and in the Hebrew Bible it says "as you go, preach the Gospel to every creature". This means that you don't need to leave your job or your schoolwork for you to preach the gospel. As a student, as a mother, as an employee you can preach the good news.

1 Thessalonians 4.13-14 “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and

rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus."

ARE YOU THERE?

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Galatians 6.9

DEVOTION 12

From Preach Mawushe

God is omnipresent, He is everywhere. He just doesn't reveal Himself every time, be at the right place for you to see Him. Being at the right place doesn't necessarily mean you have to be at church only, the right place may be your workplace, your classroom or even in your garden.

1 Samuel 9:3, 17 "Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to his son Saul, "Please take one of the servants with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." So when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people."

Saul was anointed king when he was send by his father to look for his lost donkey. This showed that Saul was an obedient son that is why God made him rule over Israel. He knew that if Saul was obedient to his father, he was also going to be obedient to Him. You see, God does not use you only when you're in church, God uses you when you're doing your everyday thing. There is something about your daily routine that reveals your character. If you're not obedient to your teacher how can you be obedient to your CEO? So many times God wants to lift us up but He cannot because we're failing to be faithful with the little things. You budget money to buy a car as a couple and you use it for your own benefits and you think God will make you the finance manager. If we want God to bless us, let us prove that we can be faithful with the little things so that He can trust us with the big ones.

Exodus 3:1-2, 4 "Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."

This is Moses' first encounter with God and he was busy leading his father-in-law's flock, not in a temple. The bible does not tell us that he was praying but that is the time when God decided to visit him. God had seen that if Moses was able to lead Jethro's flock, it was not going to be difficult to lead His people out of Egypt. So the main issue is be where you're supposed to be at the right time God will bless you there.

Philippians 2:14 "Do all things without complaining and disputing,"

Just try to perfect your work all the time. Do everything whole heartedly whether you're appreciated or not because there's a God who rewards. By all things, Paul meant everything. God wants to use you at your workplace so in everything you do there, do not complain. God wants to anoint you where you are.

Judges 6:11 "Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!"

The Angel of God went and sat under the terebinth tree waiting for Gideon to come. Just imagine if that day Gideon hadn't done his routine of threshing wheat, maybe he might not have had an encounter with God. This is what God is still doing today, he will visit you in your office ,in your classroom, while your cleaning your father's car, when you're doing laundry because that is where he expect you to be. God does not wait for Sunday to bless you.

2 Samuel 11:1-2 "It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold."

Instead of going to war David stayed and that's when he saw Uriah's wife bathing. If you're not at the right place you'll always find every reason to sin against God. And in David's case, one sin led to death of two people, the first one being Uriah and the second one being the child that Bathsheba bore. So in everything you do, just do with perfection. Yes, your boss is difficult to impress but just try to be early at work. Your father is an alcoholic but still obey him

because that's what God wants us to do. The big question is, **are you there where God wants you to be?**

Finally:

Galatians 6.9 "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

GOD'S FIRST PRINCIPLE

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Colossians 3:1-2

DEVOTION 13

From Preach Mawushe

Our God is so mighty and powerful, He's bigger than every problem we face. So many times we face problems that we tend to focus on those problems more than God. You failing to pay your bills doesn't change the fact that God is the provider. Your mother dying due to cancer doesn't mean He is not the giver of life. In the midst of your sickness, God remains the Healer. What we just need to do is give Him more attention than our current situations. God not solving your problems doesn't mean He's not able to do it.

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

By all these other things, Jesus meant your every need in life that includes food, clothes etc. Jesus is simply saying before your life, put God first. Early in the morning when you wake up, before you tell him your problems, praise Him. Jesus is saying focus on me more, for in Him is the good life that we desire. Before you try to be the perfect mother or perfect son that your family desire, seek God's righteousness.

Numbers 21:8-9 "Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived."

This is when the children of Israel had complained to God that God sent fiery serpents and bit the people. So from the verses above, Moses is now telling the people to focus on the bronze serpent which was on the pole rather than the ones that were biting them. This is one of the hardest thing to do, focusing on God when you have so many problems that need your attention. Maybe you have a demanding job, bills that need to be paid and a sick child but God is saying put me first. Which is something that is not easy and we often ask ourselves questions like, how can l praise Him when my child is sick? How can l call Him

Jehovah Jireh (the Lord my Provider) when l have many debts and He's not even providing anything. This is the same situation the Israelites were in, being told to look at the bronze serpent which was on the pole when so many living serpents were trying to bit them. God is simply saying l know you have so many assignments, l know your business is demanding but l am more important than that.

Philippians 2:21 “For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.”

It's so much easier to seek our own things rather God's. So many times we buy ourselves fancy things but nothing for God. Many of us use the bibles in our phones because we feel like buying one is a waste of money. We prioritize our own things more that is why you see a congregation full of rich people who owns many houses take more than five years trying to build one church building when one family can build that building in a year. The secret to everything is God, He deserves all the glory and the honour not our finances.

Colossians 3:1-2 “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Let us put our focus on God and His kingdom because earthly things will pass away. The word of God tells us that heaven and earth will pass away but the word of God remains and that same word is telling us to focus on God. God knows what we need before we say it so let us praise Him and He'll take of our lives.

Palm .92:7-8 “When the wicked spring up like grass, And when all the workers of iniquity flourish, It is that they may be destroyed forever. But You, LORD, are on high forevermore.”

David is one of the people who had mastered the first principle of God. When chased by his enemies he still managed to praise God. Even in our prayers we should put more attention to God because there's no problem we're going to say that He doesn't know or which is greater than Him. So let us praise Him who is on high forevermore.

BE DIFFERENT

"But Noah was different. GOD liked what he saw in Noah. This is the history of the generations of Noah. Noah was a just and righteous man, blameless in his [evil] generation; Noah walked [in habitual fellowship] with God." Genesis 6:8-9

DEVOTION 14

From Preach Mawushe

When we look at our economy we feel like everyone is struggling with finances but there are some people who are some people who are living luxurious lives. When we expect everyone to be affected by inflation, other prayerful people like us are not even affected! As a matter of fact things are actually going smooth for them. It just takes God's grace (favour) to locate you and your life will change for He's the lifter of man. You have to choose to be different because you're a child of God, your life should be different from that of a non-believer.

1 Timothy 4:12 "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

In this world where almost every teenage boy is into drugs, where sexual immortality has now become the norm, you can choose be different by doing the right thing. Paul is telling Timothy to set an example for the believers that is choosing to live a righteous life. When you choose to live differently, you'll find favour in the eyes of God.

Numbers 17:5, 8 "The staff belonging to the man I choose will sprout, and I will rid myself of this constant grumbling against you by the Israelites." the next day Moses went into the of the Testimony, and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and brought forth buds and produced blossoms and yielded [ripe] almonds."

Aaron's rod is the only one that sprouted because he had been chosen by God. Yes everyone is struggling but because you're a child of God don't settle for less. Choose to be different in your family when your other siblings didn't get married properly just because you're a child of God you have to change your story. God

already blessed ‘your going out and your coming in’ and the works of your hands. This means your job is a blessed one and you shall not labour in vain.

Daniel 1:17 “To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.”

Be excellent even in school, let them know that you're chosen by God. When your life is compared with that of a non-believer, there should be a difference. It necessarily does not mean your life will go smoothly but it means after the storms have calmed, you'll see God. Just because you have no money it doesn't mean you're not blessed, money doesn't not matter to God. When counting your blessings, start with the things money can’t buy. They are priceless gifts from heaven. Things like health, joy, your family and your body.

Job 1:1 “In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.”

Job was not the only person in the land of Uz, what made him different was his character. Job was blameless, he feared God and he also shunned evil, this is how God wants us live like. As a child of God, what are you known for? What makes us different from other people besides just going to church? Do we have an admirable character, like Job? People should testify good things about you.

Luke 2:25-26 “Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.”

As Christians, character matters a lot. Simeon is being described as someone who was righteous and devout and that made him different from other people that is why he got the privilege to see Christ. Simeon had a lot of expectations from God and was devoted to Him and he saw Jesus before he died, something that he had waited for.

Genesis 6.8-9 “But Noah was different. GOD liked what he saw in Noah. This is the history of the generations of Noah. Noah was a just and righteous man, blameless in his [evil] generation; Noah walked [in habitual fellowship] with God.”

Noah was different, he had a character different from those of his evil generation and he found favour in the eyes of God. Seek God's grace with your lifestyle like

what Noah did. ***In that crooked and perverse generation, choose righteousness.***

From Makado Vespers (Sermon Extension)

Psalm 89:17, 24 "For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted."

The Lord is our strength and our glory. In the Lord's favour, our horn is exalted. In His favour, we get our degrees, weddings, marriages and high salaries. The faithfulness and mercy of God is with us. By them, we are exalted. From the Lord's faithfulness and mercy upon our lives, we get prosperity and success in all areas of our lives i.e healthy and finances. In the Lord's name, our horn is exalted. Since we understand that by the Lord's favour, faithfulness, mercy and His name our horn is exalted, therefore let us ***choose to be different.***

THE RECEIVING END OF LOVE

"This is what I command you: that you love one another."

John 15:17

DEVOTION 15

From Preach Mawushe

We all want to be appreciated when we do something good and when we show love to someone, we want the other person to love us back. Just imagine the feeling of giving someone who appreciates you and values your gift. More often we want people to recognise our love but can we do the same?

John 15:17 "This is what I command you: that you love one another."

We were commanded to love one another as believers. The thing that make this commandment difficult to follow is the issue of loving someone who does not recognise or appreciate you back. Loving one another comprises of the aspect that love is mutual, more like a two way thing. It means when another believer shows you love, you return the favour.

Matthew 22:39 "And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself."

In this sermon we want to focus on the neighbour more. I want you to view yourself as the neighbour and according to our sermon title, your side is the one receiving love. We want to focus more on how to be a good neighbour. As a believer, you don't choose who your neighbour will be, you just have to accept the love you get from people despite of their background. For example in the ancient days the Jews and the Samaritans did not see face to face and one occasion a Jewish expert in the law asked Jesus who his neighbour was then Jesus narrated the story of the story of the Good Samaritan.

Luke.10.36-37 "What do you think? Which of the three became a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?" "The one who treated him kindly," the religion scholar responded. Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

This is the story of the Good Samaritan and Jesus had finished narrating when he asked that question. Obviously under normal circumstances the Levi or the priest was supposed to be the neighbour to the attacked man but in this story it

was not the case, why? It is because the Samaritan was the one who showed to the attacked man. This happens in church, at school and even at our homes. How many times do we see an orphan being taken care of by a relative but not even valuing the love being expressed. At school, when the teacher is trying to help a student, the student pays no attention at all. We should appreciate other people's love and efforts and by that, we will fulfil the commandment since the believer's love is reciprocal.

Be someone who is lovable. Appreciate the love you get from others that includes your partner, friend, church mate etc. You don't choose your neighbour. If someone is nice to you, be nice too. Do not make it difficult for other believers to follow the golden rule.

Luke.17.15-18 "One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him--and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"

This is a story of ten lepers who got healed by Jesus then one of them who was Samaritan came and thanked Jesus of which there was bad blood between the Samaritans and the Jews. This story just reflects what happens between God and us. We're that receiving side of God's love, so let us try by all means to return the favour. The bible says we love God because He first loved us. We should appreciate God's love not like what the other nine lepers did.

As l conclude, my final words are **'let us love one another.'**

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

"And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink."
Genesis 21:19

DEVOTION 16

From Preach Mawushe

This is when Haggai had finished all the water she had in the desert. She did not want to see her son die so she placed her under a shrub and moved a distance. Then God heard the cries of Ishmael and that's when He opened the eyes of Haggai and she saw the well that was there. This meant that the well was there all along but Haggai failed to see it.

So many times we struggle to see the blessings of God in our lives because we want God to use our methods when He has already made ways for us. Our eyes are closed so we see desserts when God has already made wells for us.

2 Kings 6:15-17 "When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

Sometimes we just focus on our problems more that we forget to look at the grace that surrounds us. The servant was worried because he only saw the great army that was approaching them and he failed to see the one that was with him. Let us ask God to open our spiritual eyes so that we may see God's blessings and how God is working things for our good. You got in an accident then you become bitter to God for that and you forgot to thank Him for preserving your life. God is right there with us but our eyes are closed and we fail to see that.

Genesis 13:10-11 "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot

chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other."

Our eyes will limit us if we fail to see right, we need an eye that sees beyond. We often cause our own destruction by the things that attract our eyes. We should not be attracted by everything like what Lot did. Lot risked his family's life just because of a decision he made based on how he saw things. Maybe if Lot had asked God to open his eyes he would have seen the wickedness that was in Sodom and Gomorrah and would never have chosen it. This applies to everyone, how often we make bad decisions because of what attracted us. When you were looking for a partner, who attracted you? When you selected your friends, what was your decision based on? Some of us are like Lot, we got attracted by the appearance and now we're trapped with bad people. We should ask God to open our eyes every time we make decisions, because it's not every time we get privileged to have relatives who intercedes for us like what Abraham did.

Jeremiah 1.11-12 "Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree." Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word."

Right here we see God asking Jeremiah what he was seeing but l like the part when God said you have seen well. This means there are times when we may be able to see things but not in the right way. For example when Jesus healed a blind man.

Mark 8:23-25 "So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking." Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly."

We need God's hand to touch us so that we may see clearly. So many times we quit when we face problems, when those problems are there to make us stronger. In those situations God will be moulding us to better people but it might look like we're being forsaken if we fail to see right.

Psalm 119:18 "Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law."

This is why David asked God to open his eyes so that he might see the wondrous things in God's laws. Sometimes we may see like the law is there to oppress us when it's actually there for our benefit.

2 Corinthians 4.18 “while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

ONE ACCORD

"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."

Acts 2:1

DEVOTION 17

From Preach Mawushe

United we stand, divided we fall! In this sermon l want us to look at the issue of working with others in one accord, teamwork. For you to be in one accord with your teammate(s) you should make sure that there is communication and you must have the same agenda with your teammates like what the apostles did.

Acts 2:1-2 "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting."

The scripture says there were in one accord in one place. This means that the apostles had agreed to meet at that place and that shows that there was communication between them. They would have prayed each one at his houses but they decided to do it in one place, together. This is the kind of unity we should have as believers.

Acts 1:14-15 "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said,"

This is when Jesus had ascended to heaven and the Bible tells us that the apostles continued in one accord in prayer. This means before Jesus died it was their tendency to pray together in one accord. One accord means that they understood each other, they listened to each other and encouraged each other to pray far above everything there was communication. This is why they were able to continue even when he was not there because there was communication. Are we able to do things as a group even when the leader is not around? We do the same or we just cooperate in church because the pastor is around or as parents at our homes we cooperate in the presence of our kids but when you're together in your room there's chaos.

There is power in unity. If we are able to work with others in one accord we will go far. Even if you look at the richest people on the planet you'll see that they cooperated with others for them to be where they are and they could not have made it alone without others. Some of us are not able to work with our workmates. Let us be able to work with others even at our workplaces like what Paul did.

Acts.18.3 “And because he was of the same occupation, he stayed with them; and they worked [together], for they were tentmakers by trade.”

Paul worked together with Aquila just because they had an occupation in common. Many times we want to do things alone we want all the glory to ourselves.

Many of us are good at workplace when we are demonstrating against the boss or our parents. Have you ever heard stories of children who team up against their parents? Sometimes we can only work as a team when we want to bring someone down, it might be a friend or another workmate but with the things of God.

Genesis 11:5 -7 “But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

God himself knew that if these people continued working together their plans would succeed and this shows the power of teamwork. If God did not cause division, the tower of Babel was going to be a success because the people had one accord, so let us learn to work with others in unity.

Psalm 133:1 “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!”

INVEST IN WHAT MATTERS

"We must work the works of Him Who sent Me and be busy with His business while it is daylight; night is coming on, when no man can work." John 9:4

DEVOTION 18

From Preach Mawushe

We all utilise the sun during the day because that's when there will be light, we tend to rest in the evening because it will be difficult to operate in the dark. That's what happens with our lives, one moment a person will be fit, the next moment they are sick and they can't remember or do anything. This is why people maximize their time when they are young and retire when they are old. Our lives are unpredictable anything can happen anytime so we should be in right standing with God.

Ecclesiastes 3:20 "All go to One place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust."

We are all dust, we're from dust and we'll return to dust. The only problem we have is that we do not know the moment and time that will happen, that is why king Solomon told us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth. When you're old, that will be the night for you since you won't be able to work to your fullest potential. So we need to utilise the time we have now to serve God.

John.4.23-24 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

God is looking for those who worship Him in truth and in spirit, not those who do it to get praises from people. In truth means you're genuine with your worship more like you don't seek people's approval to serve God and your speed is not determined by other people. If you just remember that you're dust and you'll return to dust that should be your daily motivation to keep you worshipping God. Worshipping in spirit means you're no longer controlled by your flesh so whether you feel like praying or not you just do it. Whether you're sleepy or not when it's time for prayer you just pray because your spirit will be in charge. Let us seek God diligently while He can be found.

Isaiah 55:6 “Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.”

This verse tells us that there will be a time where God will be scarce so let's us make sure that we call upon Him while He can be found. That moment when there is lot of work to do in church, that's an opportunity for you to serve Him. Spending our time on earthly things is a waste of time because it will pass away.

John 9:4 “We must work the works of Him Who sent Me and be busy with His business while it is daylight; night is coming on, when no man can work.”

Who did Jesus refer to by the one who sent me? God is the one who sent Jesus. So let us do what God has called us to do while we still can. If health wise we are fit to clean the chairs in church, share the word, read the bible, pray regularly then let's do it because the time will come when we won't be able to work for God. You might end up on the death bed not able to do anything, where you won't be able to preach or sing, that moment you will wish if you had done God's work when you had the time. Be wise with your time, you have to **invest in what matters**.

The question is what is the work that we're supposed to do?

John.6.28-29 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

We have to believe in Jesus, to believe in the works that he did. How he died for us on the cross of Calvary and set us free. Let’s utilise the time we have now to serve God, pray regularly and to give to the poor.

Psalm 27.4 “One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.”

Let this be your prayer.

IT'S A PROCESS

"For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined."

Psalm 66:10

DEVOTION 19

From Preach Mawushe

Have you ever been in that situation where God seems distant ,when problems are pouring in your life and you feel like you have been forsaken?

Psalm 22:1 "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?"

David was once in that situation. He felt like God had forsaken him, his enemies were up against him and he felt like God was distant. Many a times we face problems and we feel like God is punishing us or He has forsaken us yet His always right there with us. There are situations when God puts us in difficult situations intentionally so that He can bring the best out of us.

Psalm 66:12 "You have caused men to ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water; But You brought us out to rich fulfilment."

David is saying you caused man to ride over our heads. This means God had caused David to be hurt in that way intentionally not because He was punishing him. You failing to pay the bills or your child getting sick or your mother dying due to cancer may be God's process of bringing you to rich fulfilment, the KJV calls it a wealthy place.

Psalm 66:10 "For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined."

Silver is a nice product, we all want jewellery made of silver but we tend to like it after it has been refined and not it's ore. We usually don't focus on the process it goes through for it to be that nice, I looked at the process of refining silver and there are two stages that are liked and those are electrolysis and roasting. Generally all the process involve the removal of impurities but they require heat. I want us to understand how that is similar to what God is doing to us. David is saying we went through fire and water (those are the struggles we're going through which includes losing your job, your business not working, you failing

in class etc) but you have brought us to rich fulfilment (that you being a humble business owner and being successful in life). It's so much easier to ask God to make us new but we may not like the process we will go through.

Isaiah 30:14 “And He shall break it like the breaking of the potter's vessel, Which is broken in pieces; He shall not spare. So there shall not be found among its fragments A shard to take fire from the hearth, Or to take water from the cistern."

God wants to create a better you so He has to break you first. In this verse God was talking to Israel and He wanted to remove the independency of Israel. He wanted His people to depend on Him that is why He had to crush her into pieces.

Finally l want us to look at manufacture of wine from grapes, I want to quickly just go through the process. After harvesting the grapes they are crushed to produce the juice then after that there is de-stemming when grape stems are being removed from the juice this process is also helpful because it removes bitterness from the juice. I will explain my point now, sometimes you're just in that process where God wants to remove bitterness from you. Maybe you've been praying for the right partner and it feels like God is not answering. The truth is He might have answered already but He wants to remove the bitterness in you that might have been caused by childhood experiences or our past relationships. Some of us are bitter because our parents left us when were young and we don't even realise that we're bitter. God is de-stemming you to remove all the bitterness because He knows you can't have a successful marriage in that state. The process might not be nice but the outcome will shock you. So whatever you're facing right now just trust the process.

Hosea 6:1 “Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up.”

RETURN TO YOUR MISTRESS – JEHOVA ELROI

"The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand. Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude. And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son."
Genesis 16:9-11

DEVOTION 20

From Preach Mawushe

So many times we go through hardships and we feel like giving up. Maybe you have been having losses at your business and you want to close it or you have been mistreated by your boss or your academic life is not doing very well, but l want to encourage you in that situation. God is with you, He lives and He sees you.

Genesis 16:2 "So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan."

In the ancient days if you were a servant or maidservant you had no control over your life. Your master did whatever he wanted with you and here that was the case with Hagar. Sarai was her mistress and just thought in her mind to use Hagar since she was her servant but she didn't ask Hagar's opinion on the matter. That's the thing with our lives, we have so many mistresses that decide things for us. It could be your boss, your partner or your friends. Like an ordinary maid Hagar needed money from Sarai and in that process she found herself in a difficult situation, sometimes you just find yourself in Hagar's situation where you no longer have control over your life due to circumstances. Do we also have those mistresses in our lives who just use us for their benefits? Some may be trapped in marriages were the husband is controlling and you're always mistreated and beaten everyday but let's look at Hagar's life.

Genesis 16:6-8 "But Abram said to Sarai, See here, your maid is in your hands and power; do as you please with her. And when Sarai

dealt severely with her, humbling and afflicting her, she [Hagar] fled from her. But the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness on the road to Shur. He said, Hagar, Sarai 's maid, where did you come from, and where are you intending to go? And she said, I am running away from my mistress Sarai."

There are those moments were you just reach that breaking point, you just feel like you can't take it anymore like Hagar you've just decided to flee but you're pregnant. And in your case you don't even know that you're carrying God's blessings in you, you're the beloved of God. You just want to quit that job, file for a divorce, drop out of school because you can't take it anymore but there is a God in heaven. Whose love reaches you in your weakest moments, a God who keeps chasing you when you run away, He sends His Angel to guide over you day and night. He will never give up on you, just like how He found Hagar, today He's finding you too. Yes your masters don't care but there's a friend who sticks closer than a brother who will look for you in that darkest hour.

Genesis 16:9 "The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

This is what God is saying in your life , return to your mistress (go back to that job, go back to school, do no quit on your marriage) and submit yourself under her hand (submit to that abusive husband/ stepmother/ boss). I like the part when the Angel said, you shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard your affliction. God has heard you ,He will give you peace, He will give you rest, He will change the way your husband/boss treats you so just return to your mistress and submit the Lord is with you.

Genesis 16:13 "She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me."

Even before He changes things just thank Him. Be grateful for the things He's about to do though you haven't seen yet. Knowing that He who promised is

faithful. Hagar gave God a name (Jehovah Elroi- the Lord who sees me) because she was thankful that God had seen her in a wilderness a place that is not nice. So just know that God sees you and He's right there with you.

Genesis 16:14 "Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered."

Beer Lahai Roi - well of One Who Lives and Sees Me

A SERVANT IS NOT GREATER THAN HIS MASTER

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, "A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's , because they do not know Him who sent Me." John.15.18-21

DEVOTION 21

From Preach Mawushe

We all want to live luxurious lives. We desire to drive the most expensive car, live in very big houses and be recognised. The truth is there's nothing wrong with that, everything good is found in Christ and the bible says the Lord maketh rich and adds no sorrow with it (Proverbs 10:22). But a rich life may not be our portion but that doesn't mean we're not blessed. Yes you're a believer but that doesn't mean you're going to have a smooth life. We will face trials and tribulations but we have to wait on God.

Luke.23.27-28, 31 "And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?"

Jesus was the Son of God yet he suffered. They mocked and persecuted him yet he endured silently. Jesus was blameless and a lowly man yet they crucified Him. That is why He is saying if they did this to Me the Son of God what will they do to you? Obviously this means we're going to face worse hatred than this. We will get mocked, persecuted but we need to endure.

John.15.18 -21 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, "A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's , because they do not know Him who sent Me."

We're not greater than Jesus, He is our master. If the world hated our master obviously they will hate us also. Every time we try to live like Christ, dress in a Christian manner or talk about Him we should be willing to suffer because the world hated Christ. Jesus is saying if they persecuted me they will persecute you this means we are to endure persecution because Jesus Himself faced it and we're not better than Him in anywhere. Be ready to suffer when standing for the truth because Christ suffer till the point of death.

John.16.1-2 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service."

If you enter a dark room and you're not warned about the obstacle at the entrance you will stumble and fall. But when you're warned about it, you will be careful when walking knowing what to expect. Let us not stumble Christ already warned us about this. We are to expect tribulations as believers.

1 Corinthians 4.12 "And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;"

Nowadays Christians no longer want to struggle. We want things that's easy and fast. We don't want any hardships and we no longer want to work with our own hands. That is why we see a lot of people going to prophets seeking for help because they can't pray on their own. Others are just impatient when waiting on God so they look for quick answers. Paul was a servant of God yet He suffered persecution, he was often thrown into prison.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 "And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

James 1:12 "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

Let us rejoice in persecute and tribulations knowing that if we do not lose heart we will be rewarded. In as much as we desire happy and stress free lives God

might have a different route for us. Let us be willing to face hardships for Christ's sake.

John 16:33 “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

LORD HELP MY UNBELIEF

"Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

Mark.9.24

DEVOTION 22

From Preach Mawushe

We all believe that God is able to do anything. We know that all things are possible with Him and that no problem is too big for Him. But sometimes we get into serious situations where we feel like God can't solve.

Mark.9.24 - Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

In Mark chapter 9 we see a father who brought his son who had a mute spirit to Jesus. Jesus then told him to believe. The father was in that situation where he believed Jesus was a healer. He just had problems believing that his son would get healed. We may have things we have been praying for, for a long time and maybe the situation got even worse. Then you started doubting, but it's high time you ask God to increase your faith. Tell him to help your unbelief.

Mark.9.24 - At once the father of the boy gave [an eager, piercing, inarticulate] cry with tears, and he said, Lord, I believe! [Constantly] help my weakness of faith!

This is the same scripture in the Amplified version. I like the part it says help my weakness of faith. We need God to help us with our weakness of faith. It's so much easier to believe that God is the provider after it have been preached about but when we are struggling with our bills we feel like He can't provide for us. The father was saying that l do believe you're the healer Jesus but since my child has been sick from birth, l have prayed about it but nothing seems to change and now l am having a weakness in faith. We need to have faith in God in whatever situation we come across knowing that He's able to do anything for us. And also because without faith it's impossible to please him.

Hebrews 11:6 - But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

If we're struggling with our faith we can't please God.

The days in which we pray and God answers immediately increases faith. But when He says wait, we start sinking because we start to doubt like what Peter did.

Matthew 14.30-31 “But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Fear replaces faith and the opposite is true. When we start being afraid of failing or of poverty we remove all the faith we have. Peter focused more on the wind and he accommodated fear. All the faith he had in Jesus disappeared that's when he started sinking. Let us look to Jesus for He is able to do great things for us if we wait.

Psalm 27.14 “Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!”

The scripture is emphasizing that we should wait on God. As we wait, let us not grow weary. Let us keep in mind that **God is never too early nor too late, He's always right on time**. We should ask Him to help our unbelief.

James 5:7-8 “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

When the storms don’t pass and the winds never cease, let our hearts remain anchored!

LEADING A QUIET LIFE

"Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you,"

1 Thessalonians 4:11

DEVOTION 23

From Preach Mawushe

Most of the time when we succeed, we want everyone to know. We want people to appreciate and recognise us. When we face problems we also want people to console us but what does the word of God say.

1 Thessalonians 4:11 "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you,"

I think this scripture was written for a time as this. A time when social media has taken control of many lives. Social media is robbing us of enjoying our lives and living quiet lives. Nowadays people no longer enjoy their lives, it's now a matter of convincing people that we're living luxurious lives through posting things on social media and getting many followers. Have you ever felt like you're on a vacation with someone just by viewing their statuses? Instead of someone enjoying their vacation, they want you to know where they are, how they got there and they even want the world to see the set-up of the room they are sleeping in. Someone will take pictures of when the waiter puts food on the table to when the plate is empty instead of enjoying the meal. But is it what the scripture says? Are we living quiet lives or we want people to know every detail of our lives to the extent that we want people to see the state you wake up in? We no longer want peaceful and quiet lives, it's now a matter of getting many likes.

Social media is very addictive, once you start getting comments and likes from people you'll want to post more. And just because last week you went out and posted it, this week you'll have to do something nice so that you may find something to post. If you look at it you'll find that it's a matter of pressure mostly. We're just looking for recognition, we want people to think we're living that life when sometimes we're struggling. That is another reason why break-ups seem more painful nowadays. People posts their partners and you're informed whenever they have an outing. And the moment their relationship

ends it will be painful because just imagine you're hurt that you're rejected and on the other side you're thinking of what will people say. So let us aspire to live quiet lives.

Proverbs 23.17 “Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day;”

Some believers are offended by how much fun sinners are having. When they look at their videos partying and drinking and having all sorts of worldly pleasure, deep inside they regret coming to Christ and are jealousy of all the fun that sinners are having. Let us not envy sinners. So many times we envy celebrities. We want to live their lifestyles, wear fancy things, drive expensive cars and gain popularity like them. Most of those celebrities are not believers at all. As believers we should focus more on the fear of the Lord. Let us spend our time seeking God rather than seeking approvals from people.

The scripture from Thessalonians continues to say minding your own business. We should not spend time trying to figure out how others are living their lives. That only brings about comparison and the issue of not being content. The thing that happens is when we focus more on other people's business like trying to figure out how they are surviving, their source of income etc. We will end up not appreciating the lives that we have or feeling like we're not rich enough or beautiful enough which is not the case. Because if you look on social media you will see that your age mates are doing greater this than you. Some of them attained those things in an ungodly way. So let us mind our business and work with our own hands for this is right.

1 Timothy 2:2-3 “for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,”

Do you want to know what's acceptable before God as a leader? Living a peaceful and quiet life. Don't be someone who stirs up fights with others. Yes we know you're the boss but quarrelling with every employee is just unnecessary attention you're drawing to ourselves. Be someone who is peaceful and quiet. Focus on God the author and finisher of your faith because people will be there when you have everything but when everything starts falling apart those same people you think are your fans will turn against you.

1 Timothy 6:6 “[And it is, indeed, a source of immense profit, for] godliness accompanied with contentment (that contentment which is a sense of inward sufficiency) is great and abundant gain.”

Be content in everything. Know that you're enough and there's a God who loves you. You don't need many followers to be convinced that you're good enough or you're beautiful enough. Above everything make it your ambition to lead a quiet and peaceful life.

WHEN NOTHING HURTS

"Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches-- Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest l be poor and steal, And profane the name of God."

Proverbs 30:8

DEVOTION 24

From Preach Mawushe

It's so much easier to pray and fast when you have no food to eat in the house. It's easier to look for God when we're struggling with life but when nothing is hurting and everything is fine we tend to relax and sit in the comfort zone.

Deuteronomy 8:10 "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, lest--when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them;"

Moses was telling the Israelites to not forget God when they are in Canaan. Because of their tendency of complaining every time they faced a problem, it was so obvious that when things were going to be well with them they would forget God who brought them out of Egypt. Maybe at the moment you're asking God to open doors for you but you also have to pray so that you will stick to God when those doors have been opened. When you now live in a luxurious house, lacking nothing, not even struggling with bills, it's easier to forget God in that moment. Let's us worship God in whatever season we're in. Temptation should not be the reason why you pray. Don't pray because you need anything from God but just pray because He is worth to be praised and to create a deep relationship with your Father.

Deuteronomy 9:4, 5 "After the LORD your God has done this for you, don't say to yourselves, `The LORD has given us this land because we are so righteous!' No, it is because of the wickedness of the other nations that he is doing it. I will say it again: The LORD your God is not giving you this good land because you are righteous, for you are not--you are a stubborn people."

We often fall into this trap whenever we've made it in life. It’s maybe when you succeed in your exams or when you get promoted at work or when your business start to flourish. We often start to think like we've done it on our own, like our strength or efforts made it work. But Moses is emphasising the issue of remembering God after we have succeeded. God blesses us because He is God, not because we're righteous.

Proverbs 30:8-9 “Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches-- Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest 1 be: poor and steal, And profane the name of God.”

On this verse the writer clearly shows us the danger of being rich. When you become rich, mind not to forget God. You'll be tempted to think that it's your own power that made you attain those riches. So let us be very careful when God answers our prayers that we don't forget Him. The only solution is to praise God every time when we're sad or happy. Your worshipping schedule should not be determined by your mood or your situation.

Revelations 4:8-11And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

God should not be your emergency number that you only call when you need help. Call Him all the time. You should also have a quality time with Him when everything is well with you. So let us worship God day and night like what the twenty four elders do because He's worthy of our praise.

WHO I AM IN CHRIST

"You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart"

2 Corinthians 3:2-3

DEVOTION 25

From Preach Mawushe

You are in the world but you're not of the world. You have to know who you are in Christ for you to be able to fulfil your purpose. This sermon will enlighten you so that you will not suffer from identity crisis.

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 "You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart"

You are a written letter, everyone is reading you whether a non-believer or a known believer. What kind of a letter are you? Just try to picture the facial expression that someone reading you would have.

Matthew 5:13 - "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

As the salt of the earth you should not lose your taste, people will throw away their food. Imagine roasted chicken with spices that looks so appetizing but without salt. Obviously you will throw that chicken away why? Because it lacks salt. Salt is also used as a preservative and if it loses its flavour it will no longer be useful so things will decay. That's what we are in the world if we lose our flavour, we will lose value in people's lives and also they will lose their lives since we're there to preserve them. Our lives should be a good example of true Christianity to the world.

Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the

house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

If you walk without the light you'll stumble and fall. Sometimes people are living in the darkness and falling because your light is not bright enough to keep them moving. You're blaming people that they are living recklessly but it's because they haven't seen the real light yet. Let your light so shine before men, so shine means it should be brighter. We are the light that should light up the world. God is our source of light.

1 Peter 2:9 "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

We obtained light from God so let us give other people the same light. It's more like the solar lights, they gain energy from the light which is the sun then we use it to light up our homes at night. So God is the sun which is the source of light and we're the solar lights that lighten the world. We gain this energy by reading the word (the bible) everyday, praying constantly and fasting, this is the only way we get connected to God. If we continue doing this, our lights will be brighter.

Galatians 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

There is a story of missionaries who were assigned to preach at different places, one of those missionary was assigned to go and preach in a certain time for a given period of time. When he went there he did not preach anything for years, he just lived his life. So when the leaders saw that he wasn't doing anything they send another person. When that person preached there about Jesus, many people repented. When there were asked they said, "We know the Jesus you're preaching, he lived here but we no longer see him these days." By this they were referring to the first missionary. This just shows that we should live a Christ-like life. We should represent Christ in the way we talk, walk and live because it's Him who now lives in us.

1 John 4:17 - Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

The other versions says we are like Him in this world. Jesus showed love to everyone, he sacrificed his life for us. Why can't we sacrifice our food, time and resources for other people. Jesus had one life and he gave it up for us, of course it was painful for Him but He did it anyway. So let us be sacrificial.

1 John 4:4-6 "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

Walk like a conquer, people will adore your God because He's greater than he who is in the world. Why do you seek traditional healers when your God is greater than that who is in the world? If you are of God, then walk, speak and dress like one. If you want to evaluate yourself just look at the people who are interested in your stories, people who adore your dress code those people show you who you are in the world. Those who speak the things of the world, the world hears them.

Psalm 139:14 - I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

Know that you're wonderfully made by God. There's no reason for you to change your skin colour or your body structure. You're fearfully and wonderful made. Be as natural as you can be. You can ask how this has to do with your identity in Christ. It does because it affects how you think. You don't have to envy other people when you know that. Some people are walking half naked because they feel like it's the only way to be recognized but you're fearfully and wonderfully made.

As we continue with this journey of faith let us keep in mind that we are God's off-springs.

THE POWER OF CONFIRMATION

"Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me."

Judges 6:17

DEVOTION 26

From Preach Mawushe

God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above what we can think or imagine if we only believe in Him. Nothing is too hard for Him. His able to heal that cancer, He's able to set you free from alcohol, depression and any other addiction you're struggling with. He just needs you to trust in Him.

Isaiah 55:8-9 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."

God has to do something in your life that will strengthen your faith. Something that is beyond your imagination because He's ways are not your ways. He has to show you a sign so that when everything else fails, you will continue trusting in Him. God is still working now. You don't have to believe in Him only because of what you've heard from your friends or from other people's testimonies. You have to experience it for yourself like what the Samaritans did.

John 4:40 "So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Here is the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman. After the Samaritan woman had finished talking with Jesus she believed Him and she told people about Him. From the verses above we read that many people had believed because they had heard Him for themselves. There's a point and time you have to experience God's power for yourself. Yes your workmate has told you about how God appeared to him when he was struggling with drugs. Your neighbour told you how her mother got healed from cancer. How He revealed the answers to your friend in an exam, all that is really nice but what has he done in your life.

You need a sign from God when you don't know what to do or which road to take or a sign to help you when you face challenges. Ask God to show you a sign like what David did.

Psalm 86:17 “Send me a sign of your favour. Then those who hate me will be put to shame, for you, O LORD, help and comfort me.”

You need a sign from God because when you worship God based on other people's experience you'll doubt when things don't go your way. God has to do things in your life so that even if you face a lot of problems because of that experience you'll keep on trusting Him. Do you think after Daniel got out of the lion's den, he doubted God regarding anything? The answer is no, because he had witnessed God's power in the lion's den himself so no matter what he heard from other people that experience kept him going.

2 Chronicles 32.24 - In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death, and he prayed to the LORD; and He spoke to him and gave him a sign.

After Hezekiah prayed God showed him a sign. Don't come out of prayer without a sign from God. When God speaks to you, ask for a sign because it will help increase your faith. Because when that thing that God promised you takes long to manifest, you'll start doubting. The God who showed Hezekiah a sign is the same God we worship today. So if you ask for a sign from Him, He will show you. Let us have a look on the sign that was shown to Hezekiah.

Isaiah 38:4-8 “And the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying, "Go and tell Hezekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city." And this is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing which He has spoken: Behold, I will bring the shadow on the sundial, which has gone down with the sun on the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward." So the sun returned ten degrees on the dial by which it had gone down.”

Isaiah 38:7-8 (Different Version) “And this is the sign that the LORD will give you to prove he will do as he promised: will cause the sun's shadow to move ten steps backward on the sundial of Ahaz!'" So the shadow on the sundial moved backward ten steps.”

To this day, there is something about time that scientists cannot figure out that is probably due to this sign.

We also need a sign for us to confirm the presence of God. Have you ever got in a situation where you don't know which road to take? Maybe you have prayed about it but you cannot figure out what God is saying or there's something in your sub-conscience and you're not sure if it's God or your own thoughts. You can use a sign as a confirmation. This is something that happens to us most of the times and it also happened to Gideon.

Judges 6:17 “Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me.”

Gideon asked for a sign to prove if it was really God who was speaking. A sign can be anything, don't limit God. You can tell God that if really my marriage is going to be peaceful again let my husband come home early today.

John “4.48 - Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

Above everything let us have faith in God because without faith it is impossible to please Him.

ALLOW HIM TO ENLARGE YOUR TERRITORY

"But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village in Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from the distant past."

Micah 5:2

DEVOTION 27

From Preach Mawushe

God is seeking a man who is willing to do His work regardless of age, gender or title. Just be willing and God will use you despite of your background. He searches the heart not the outward appearance so don't think you're not rich enough or beautiful enough, He's looking for someone like you. Let us look at people who had humble backgrounds but God used.

Judges 6:14 "Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go with the strength you have and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!" "But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!"

Gideon didn't see himself fit to rescue the children of Israel because of his background. So many times we feel unworthy to do God's work because of our background or even our past. God works with you because of who He is not who you are. He uses who He sees fit not who we see fit. People's perspectives are limited because we base our thinking on past experiences but God sees beyond. The closest people to us may even fail to see our potential and our capacity but God made us and He knows us in and out. We have a good example of someone whose friends failed to see his potential.

1 Samuel 10:11-12 "When his friends heard about it, they exclaimed, "What? Is Saul a prophet? How did the son of Kish become a prophet?" But one of the neighbours responded, "It doesn't matter who his father is; anyone can become a prophet." So that is the origin of the saying "Is Saul a prophet?"

When it's God's doing, it doesn't matter whose child you're. It doesn't matter if you were raised by a single mother or a divorcee, your background doesn't matter to God. God uses who He wills. Saul was the first king of Israel yet his background was a humble one. His friends couldn't even believe when he saw him prophesying because he's background didn't make him fit enough to

prophesy. We have those people in our lives or we're those people who don't seem fit to drive fancy cars, live in big houses or to even pray but God is changing our stories today. God is the lifter of man and He wants to rewrite your story. He will do the impossible, what did make sense in people's eyes. Sarah is someone who experienced the hand of God in a life, God changed her story. Who would have thought that one day she would give birth to a son?

Genesis 21.6 “And Sarah declared, "God has brought me laughter! All who hear about this will laugh with me. For who would have dreamed that I would ever have a baby? Yet I have given Abraham a son in his old age!"

It was indeed funny seeing a grandmother washing nappies for a son young enough to be her great grandchild. God works in ways we cannot even imagine because He's God, the mighty one of Israel.

John 1.45 -46 “Philip went off to look for Nathanael and told him, "We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth." "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from there? Just come and see for yourself," Philip said.”

Nazareth was a place looked down upon by people but Jesus, the son of God grew up there. No one would ever think that something good could come from it. They're places where we don't expect to find anything good. Maybe you've been assigned to go and work in a certain town or company or to learn at a certain school that doesn't seem big enough but from that place God is raising giants. That was also the case with Bethlehem it was a small town but that's where Jesus was born.

Micah 5:2 - But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village in Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from the distant past.

You're that great ruler that should come out of that place. If God is in it, don't worry about what people say about that environment. No matter how small the school, company or city is, just know that if the Almighty is in it great things will come out of it and you're part of that.

Let us be willing to work for God because He's able to enlarge our territory.

YOUR NAME OR REPUTATION

"A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favour rather than silver and gold."

Proverbs 22:1

DEVOTION 28

From Preach Mawushe

Your name or reputation says a lot about you. Especially nicknames, they come from your behaviour. Maybe it was one event but you're now being labelled for that. Names can bring curses or blessings in our life. We're going to be dwelling much on names, whether as in reputation or something that you're called by.

Proverbs 22:1 - A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favour rather than silver and gold.

The scripture says a good reputation is to be chosen rather than great riches. What are you known for? Your reputation tells us a lot about your character. Let's us look at a man who had a good reputation.

1 Kings 10:1 - When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's reputation, which brought honour to the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

Solomon had a reputation that brought honour to the name of God. What about you? Does your reputation bring honour or shame? Is God not being mocked by people because of you? A good reputation or name can open doors for you so being poor with a good reputation is better than being rich with a bad reputation.

Esther 9:4 - Mordecai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful.

Mordecai was prominent in the king's palace and his reputation spread throughout the provinces thus Mordecai became more powerful. Even after being promoted, Mordecai maintained his good reputation by his good character, that's how he became more powerful. We should also do the same when God opens doors for us.

Luke 23:50-51 “Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.”

The Bible here describes John of Arimathea as a good and just man. Ccan people say that about you? People should give a good report about you when asked. Don't make it difficult for people to prepare speeches on your burial, live right!

Genesis 17:5-6 “No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.”

Do you think even if God did not change Abraham's name, His purpose was not going to be fulfilled? This was God showing us the impacts and importance of a good name. Some of our names are bringing curses in our lives. Imagine being named Problem, you'll always cause problems simply because you're being called to that name every day. But our names should not limit us, they should not determine the kind of life we live.

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 “Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested.”

Jabez prayed for the enlargement of his territory and God granted him his request. We can also make that same prayer today, God is there to help us and enlarge our territory. He's able to change our reputation like what happened to apostle Paul.

There's a man whose name is above all other names, His name is Jesus. That name can heal the sick, make the blind to see and raise the dead. Call that name and your life will never be the same again. Because at the mention of it, every knee must bow and every tongue confess that He's Lord.

Philippians 2:10–11 “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

THE LORD WATCHES OVER YOU

"The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands."

Psalms 138:8 (KJV)

DEVOTION 29

From Makado Vespers

If we look around us, we will see the sun, the moon and the stars. The sun shines every day, the moon and stars appear every night. There is not a single day the sun stopped shining and there is no day the moon and stars failed to appear at night. It's so obvious that tomorrow the sun will shine and night will come where darkness covers the earth with the stars providing light. There is no single day this failed to happen. But when were the sun and stars created?

Genesis 1:14-18 "And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good."

In Genesis one, we see God creating the sun and the moon and the shining stars. They were created in the beginning, that's more than five thousand years ago. The sun was created before Abraham or Moses were present on earth. Yet, there is not a single day till this very day when the sun failed to shine. From this we can see the perfection of God's doing. The works of the Lord are perfect and they stand forever. The sun and the moon and the stars are still there, even today and they never malfunctioned, yet they were created just one time at one command and no repairs or modifications has been done to them, still they function properly.

The universe God created in the beginning is still in perfect operation to this day. He created the water and the land in the beginning, yet till this very day we are still using the same water and same land. And it's more than enough for all

the inhabitants of the earth. Great is this mighty hand of the Lord. This mighty hand which made things which are perfect to this very day is the same mighty hand which holds you.

Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

The same hand that made the sun in the beginning, and the sun which still perfectly shines till this very day is the same hand that holds your life. If His creation, the stars, the land and the water stand till this very day without failing, how then can the Lord fail to guard your life? The Lord will not fail you. **The Lord will not fail to protect you or to guard you from all harm**. The Lord said He will keep you from all harm.

Psalm 91:14-16 "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

The Lord said He will rescue you. In the scripture above, the Lord also says He will answer you. Keep praying, the Lord will answer you. The Lord also said He will be with you in trouble, He will deliver you and honour you. He will satisfy you with long life and will keep you. The Lord is your Sustainer. He sustains you in all things. The Lord will not fail to keep you. **The Lord watches over you!**

Psalm 121:2-4 "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

Your help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth. Look at the earth He made, the sun and moon which still shine, your help comes from the same hand which made everything you see. He will not let your foot slip, he will not allow you to fall. The Lord who watches over you will not slumber or sleep. The Lord doesn't sleep and He is always looking at you, **guarding you, protecting you, providing for you** and making sure that all your needs are met.

Psalms 121:5-8
"The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.
The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

The Lord is your keeper. He keeps you safe. You don't keep yourself. God says more than it's your responsibility to keep yourself, it's the Lord's responsibility to keep you. It's because He made you. On top of that, it's because He loves you and He cares for you.

The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. When he went to war, an lsraelite soldier held his shield at the left hand-side and the spear at the right hand-side. So the right hand had no shield because it was holding the spear. Now David says, at the right hand-side which holds no shield because it's holding the spear and the shield is at the left, **the Lord is the shield at the right**. David is saying l have shields at both ends, the Lord is the shield. During your moment of weakness, when you are at a disadvantage, the Lord is the shield at the right.

He will not allow the sun or moon to hurt you. The Lord will preserve you from evil. He preserves 'your going in and your coming out.' Paul says all things are working for my good.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

How can Paul say God is working for His good when Paul was in prison? Paul was in jail, he didn't commit any crime for him to be imprisoned yet he says it's working for my good? When l read the book of Acts, l understood why. Let's see why.

Acts 9:22-25,28-30

[22]Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.
[23]After many days had gone by, there was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill him,
[24]but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him.
[25]But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.
[28]So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in

Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.
[29]He talked and debated with the Hellenistic Jews, but they tried to kill him.
[30]When the believers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

After Saul was converted, in Damascus where he was in, they wanted to kill him and he escaped. When he went to Jerusalem, they wanted to kill him too and he had to escape. The only place Paul was safe was in prison under the watch of the prison guards. When Paul looks at himself in prison, he sees God protecting him from all who wanted to kill him. Because he was in prison, free from death threats, he could write letters to all the churches, and these letters combined is the bible we are having today. This is evidence that surely God works for our good. The Lord will not fail to keep us. In all things he works for our good but we just don't see how. **I believe the Lord when in Psalms He says** 'He perfects everything concerning me.'

Psalms 138:8(KJV) "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands."

The Lord perfects all that concern us. Our marriages concern us, our children's academic performance concern us, our parent's health concern us, our jobs/careers concern us, our health concern us and **the Lord brings that to perfection**. Even when we are old, it will be the Lord who will sustain us.

Isaiah 46:4

"[4]Even to your old age and gray hairs

I am he, I am he who will sustain you.

I have made you and I will carry you;

I will sustain you and I will rescue you."

THE UNSEEN REALITIES OF THE FUTURE

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence."

Daniel 7:13

DEVOTION 30

From Makado Vespers

The opening sermon for this book was '**The Unseen Realities Of The Present**.' Let's finish with '**The Unseen Realities Of The Future**.' One of the unseen realities of the future is that the Lord will wipe away tears of all those who mourn.

Revelation 21:4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

The Lord will wipe every tear from our eyes. We will be comforted, He will erase the tears caused by all the troubles we are facing in this current age. In the future, when we are in heaven, they won't be death or mourning. There won't be any crying or pain. We would have entered the joy and peace and rest of our Father.

Revelation 22:3-5 "No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever."

The throne of the Lord and of the lamb will be in the city. In other words, we are saying, something like seven houses away from where you live will be where the throne of God is. We will be living in the same city and same street with the throne of God. We are saying, whilst just walking in the city, you can come across Jesus anytime. We will be living in the same street with Him.

We will see the face of the Lord. This is a reality of the future, that we will see His face. We will all stand before the Lord and see his face. There won't be any night. There won't be any light from the sun or from any lamp because the

glory of the Lord will give us light. We will see Christ and live with him. Imagine just walking around and getting a handshake from Jesus. More than just a handshake, we will get gifts/rewards from Jesus.

Revelation 22:12-13 "Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

Jesus says His reward is with Him and He will give to each person according to what they have done. We will get rewards from Christ for our labour in His kingdom. Quick question - what are you doing for Christ that He will reward you for. Have you tied your life to a kingdom purpose that serves Jesus so that He will reward you for it? Jesus is saying He is coming soon and his reward is with Him. By the way, you have to remember that marriages won't be recognised at the resurrection, Jesus said at the resurrection we will be like angels (no wives or husbands).

Matthew 22:23-30
[23]That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.
[24]"Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him.
[25]Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother.
[26]The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh.
[27]Finally, the woman died.
[28]Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"
[29]Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.
[30]At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

Since at the resurrection we will be like the angels, marriage not being observed, therefore more than we are committed to our spouses, let's be committed to the kingdom of God too. You can't give an excuse like 'my husband forced me not to develop my relationship with God.' Jesus said at the resurrection we won't be given in marriage so let's prioritize God in our families.

Matthew 24:1-2 “Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

The disciples wanted Jesus to adore the beauty of the temple buildings. Jesus in response said everything will be destroyed. All these buildings that surround us will be gone. Let's listen to Peter, he gives us a better description of this event.

2 Peter 3:10-14 “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly livesas you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”

These are very great words we get from Peter. He says the heavens will disappear with a roar. Element will be destroyed by fire. What are these elements? It’s the mountains, the seas and the land. He goes on to say the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Peter goes on to say that day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. Everything we see will melt. These are the unseen realities of the future.

I cannot avoid the remaining scriptures from the text we read. Peter then asks us, since everything will be destroyed in that way, what kind of people we ought to be? Now you know the unseen realities of the future that everything will melt in fire, what kind of person then do you ought to be? Peter says let's live holy and godly lives. Peter says a new heaven and a new earth will come, so let's be found at peace with Christ. Daniel says the Son of man will appear in the clouds.

Daniel 7:13 “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.”

Daniel didn't know Jesus, he lived 14 generations before the coming of Jesus.

Matthew 1:17 “Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.”

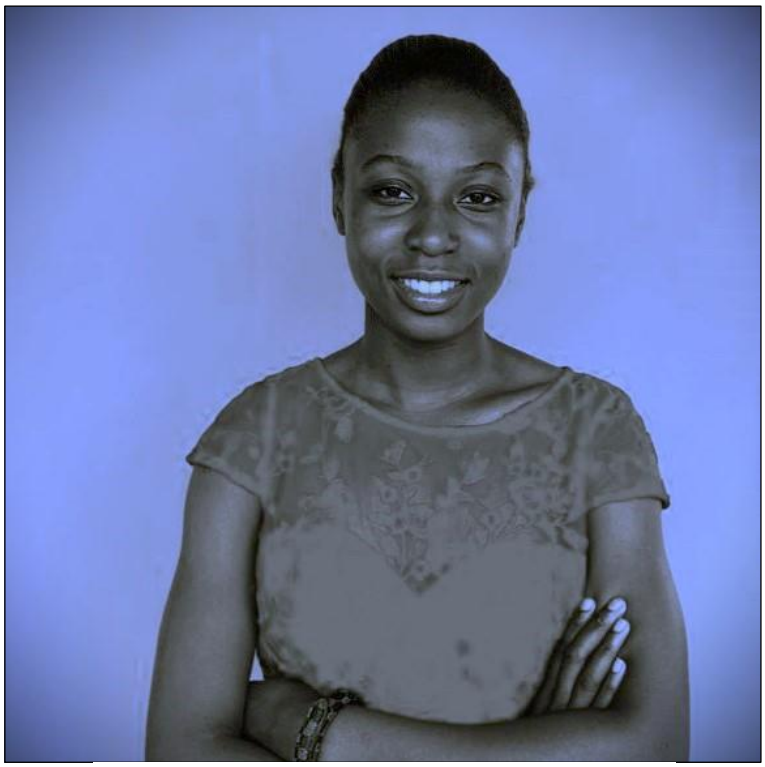
Daniel lived in the exile to Babylon. They were 14 generations from the exile to the Messiah. Daniel was 14 generations behind the coming of Jesus, yet when Daniel writes, he says l see the son of man coming with the clouds and He approached the ancient of days (God). What a prophecy from Daniel? That means these things really are true. We started the book with the unseen realities of the present, we are now finishing with the unseen realities of the future. Let's close the unseen realities of the future by reading from the writings of Paul.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 “Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.”

If we look at our daily lives, we are burying people every day. I want to say this to you and l need you to listen to the following fact. **There are more dead bodies than bodies alive**. Ever since the world was created up until now, all bodies were buried into the ground. That means the ground has more dead bodies than the ones alive. There are more dead bodies buried in the earth than bodies alive. This should ring something into your mind, that the end of us all is death and being buried in the earth (soil).

But Paul says, we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed. Yes, we are burying our friends and relatives today they shall not all sleep forever. We shall all be changed. We might live rich and fancy lives, with good marriages and pleasure every day. One day, we will die. After we die, we shall not be dead forever (that's what sleeping means) but we shall be raised again to life. Every body the earth has consumed, the earth will release. Our perishable bodies with be clothed with imperishable. Our mortal bodies will be clothed with immortality. **These are the unseen realities of the future!**

MEET YOUR AUTHORS



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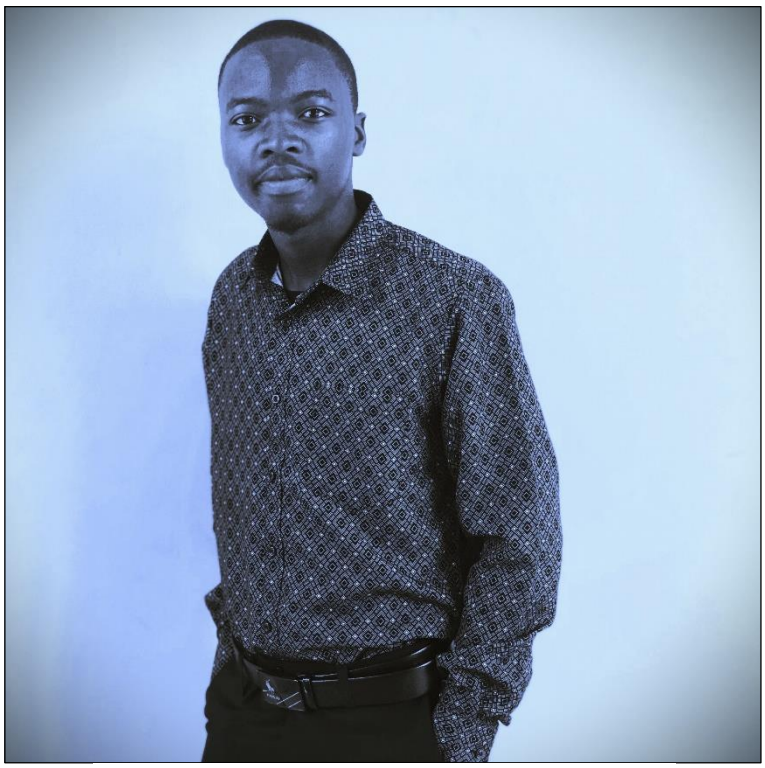

MAKADO VESPERS

Closing Thoughts:

As we conclude this devotional, we trust that your heart has been filled with the richness of God's Word. His truth is not bitter but sweet—a source of joy, peace, and life.

Let this journey not be the end but the beginning of a lifelong pursuit of His presence. Continue to consume His Word daily, allowing it to guide your steps, shape your thoughts, and renew your spirit.

May your life be a testimony of the sweetness of His Word, reflecting His love and truth to the world.

— Preach Mawushe & Vespers Makado

Conclusion:

Title: A Life Filled with His Sweetness

As you close this book, we leave you with this truth: God's Word is not only powerful; it is life-giving and sweet to the soul. Those who meditate on it day and night are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in every season (Psalm 1:2-3).

You are called to feast on His Word daily, allowing it to strengthen your faith and shape your journey. Every Scripture you have encountered in this devotional is an invitation to draw closer to Him and experience His unfailing love.

May your heart remain steadfast, your spirit nourished, and your faith unwavering. Go forth and live a life that reflects the sweetness of His presence in all you do.

With Kingdom blessings,

— Preach Mawushe & Vespers Makado

About the Authors

Preach Mawushe and Vespers Makado are passionate servants of Christ, dedicated to spreading the transformative power of God's Word. Through preaching, teaching, and writing, they seek to inspire believers to embrace the fullness of God's truth and live lives deeply rooted in His presence.

With years of ministry experience, they have witnessed firsthand the power of God's Word to heal, restore, and bring joy. Their mission is to equip believers to cultivate a lifestyle of devotion, prayer, and unshakable faith.

They continue to serve the Kingdom through their ministries, leadership, and teachings, encouraging the Body of Christ to taste and see that the Lord is truly good.

This book was written in April 2025

SWEET AS HONEY

Sweet as Honey is a devotional designed to nourish your soul with the richness of God's Word. Just as honey refreshes and strengthens, these reflections offer encouragement, wisdom, and divine truth for your daily walk. With each reading, may your faith grow deeper, your spirit be renewed, and your heart be filled with the sweetness of His presence.

Through life's challenges and triumphs, God's promises remain steadfast, offering peace and assurance. This devotional invites you to meditate on His goodness, trust in His plans, and embrace His unfailing love. May every word inspire you to walk boldly in faith, knowing that His grace is always enough.

Preach Mawushe

Sweet as Honey is a devotional crafted to fill your heart with the richness of God's Word. Like honey to the soul, these reflections bring comfort, wisdom, and strength for each day. May every reading draw you closer to His presence, deepening your faith and refreshing your spirit.

God's truth is unchanging, His love unshakable, and His grace ever-sufficient. This devotional invites you to savor His promises, rest in His peace, and walk in His light. May His Word be the sweetness that sustains you, guiding you in every step of your journey.

Vespers Makado